

# THE M WORD

By 1stLt. Evan Hill, USMC

**A**s an H2P, I tried to learn the seven principles of CRM. However, in my few flights as a new HAC in the CH-53D, I realized another principle should be stressed. And, of all places, it is right under our noses in the words “crew resource management”: the principle of management. I believe management may be the most important principle because it ties together the seven main principles.


In all the CRM classes I have taken, I cannot remember anyone specifically discussing, or even identifying the management aspect of CRM. No one’s discussed what to do when you have an overbearing crew member, how to handle multiple disagreements, or how to adapt and maximize the many different personalities of a crew.

As I look back at my time as an H2P, I never got involved with the CRM principles as much as I should have. I just went along, doing my duties, relying on the HAC to take care of whatever situation came up. I lived in my sheltered H2P life and took CRM for granted. Just going through the motions never gave me a true appreciation of it. Now, as a HAC, CRM has presented the most challenges.

Although cohesion among the crew is vital to mission accomplishment, a new HAC receives limited CRM

training on managing a crew. When I compare the time put into pilot-skill training to CRM training, the disproportion is clear. The management aspect of CRM never was a focal point during my time as an H2P; the focus was on learning the aircraft and the outside environment, such as emergencies, SOPs, limits, and regulations.

With the stick time I now have, I feel comfortable managing an aircraft. However, with up to five different crew members each flight, each with different experience levels, personalities, techniques, and personal quirks, you can throw predictability out the window. I now am acutely aware of these variables and the influences they have on me. With such a variety in crew members, you can’t sit back and expect things to be done the same way each and every flight. Learning to adjust my management



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techniques to accommodate each crew has been on the top of my “need to improve list.”

I have had a few moments where I had to think through a situation and learn new lessons. As the HAC, I am responsible for the conduct of my crew and the results of their actions.

The crew is your eyes and ears. It is easy to convey your thoughts and intentions to the person sitting across from you at an arm’s length. But, when more than half your crew is behind you, out of sight, independently functioning, crew management becomes vital. A lot goes on in the main cabin when doing a troop or cargo lift. Lots of moving parts are in the back, most of which you can’t see while you are strapped down in the cockpit. It is scary to think of what can happen and

how much is out of your physical control; yet, it’s your responsibility.

As pilots, we cover many aspects of flying in depth and with great detail. Whether you’re learning aircraft systems, procedures, EPs, regulations, tactics, or mission briefs, success is the result of crew resource management. CRM is the foundation to accomplishing a mission and maintaining safety, but it is relegated to one of those “topics we have to cover every year.” It ends up reduced to a quick PowerPoint presentation.

Instead of going through every flight doing things “just well enough” to get the job done, I urge you to continually improve your CRM skills. Will you be an effective manager when you need your entire crew to mesh and act as one? 🦅

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